

Juvenile Justice Improvement Committee  
Judicial Conference of Indiana

**Meeting**  
March 4, 2011

The Juvenile Justice Improvement Committee of the Judicial Conference of Indiana met on Friday, March 4, 2011 from 12:00 Noon – 3:00 p.m. at the Indiana Judicial Center.

1. Members present. Christopher L. Burnham, Steven H. David, Deborah A. Domine, Roger L. Duvall, James D. Humphrey, Lori K. Morgan, Peter J. Nemeth, G. George Pancol, Carl H. Taul and Loretta H. Rush, Chair.
2. Staff present. Jeffrey Bercovitz, Anne Jordan, and Angela Reid-Brown provided the committee with staff assistance.
3. Guests present. Judge Charles Pratt; Jeff Lozer, Chief Legal Counsel, Department of Child Services; Jesse Hahnel, Attorney, National Center for Youth Law, Tamara Perry, Intern, and Stephanie Yoder, Indiana Youth Institute.
4. Minutes. The minutes of the meeting on January 7, 2011 were approved.
5. Update on Mental Health in Detention Pilot Project. Jeffrey Bercovitz gave an update on the progress of the Mental Health in Detention Pilot Project. He distributed a report entitled “Indiana Juvenile Mental Health Screening, Assessment and Treatment Project” dated 2011 by Matthew C. Aalsma, PhD., and a powerpoint about the project. He reported there are now 14 pilot sites.
6. Presentation by Jesse Hahnel. Mr. Hahnel, National Center for Youth Law, gave a presentation on the educational needs of children in foster care. He said an “educational champion” should be appointed by a court in every CHINS case. This should be an existing adult in the child’s life, including a parent. He reported a pilot program would begin in April or May in Marion County. He stated DCS is also involved in this project and will develop a plan for educational champion implementation statewide. Committee members advised they are using education surrogates. Mr. Hahnel noted an education surrogate can only be used in special education cases.
7. Presentation by Jeff Lozer, Indiana Department of Child Services.
  - a. Mr. Lozer distributed a handout which included materials about Permanency in 24 months, the use of substitute care, and average length of time from the beginning of the case. Committee members indicated concern when reviewing the information distributed, and asked for clearer information. Mr. Lozer reported six (6) new attorney positions had been added.
  - b. Judge Rush requested a warning to a court in advance if an order from a court does not meet Indiana law and the county will be charged for the cost of the placement ordered. She noted two counties have been notified of orders which are deficient.

c. Mr. Bercovitz reported a permanency session would be held at the Probation Officers Annual Meeting in May.

8. Proposed legislation.

a. Mr. Bercovitz distribute the following bills: SB 465 - DCS legislation; SB 34 - Interstate Compact on Juveniles legislation; HB 1107 - Preventative programs for at-risk children; HB 1201- Release of adoption information; HB 1316 - DOC and county parental reimbursement legislation; HB 1422 - Notice to parent, guardian, or custodian and HB 561 – no use of community corrections funds for juveniles. They agreed HB 561 should be corrected to continue to permit use of community correction funds for juveniles.

b. Committee members agreed by consensus to ask judges with legislative ideas to bring them to this committee for review and to make this suggestion via email and make the announcement again at the Juvenile Court Judges Annual Meeting.

c. Members of the committee discussed the need to be proactive with legislators. They could contact legislators to invite them (1) to attend the Annual Meeting, (2) selected meetings of the committee or (2) a briefing in advance of the legislative session.

9. Next meeting dates. Members of the committee agreed to meet again on Friday, April 8, 2011 and not meet on May 6. They agreed to meet on Friday, June 3, 2011, October 7, 2011 and November 4, 2011 all from 12:00 noon – 3:00 p.m. at the Indiana Judicial Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Bercovitz, Director  
Juvenile and Family Law